

from its natural deposits underground by any means or method, and the work of preparing the coal so extracted, and includes custom coal preparation facilities;

Transfer means any change in the work assignment of a Part 90 miner by the operator and includes: (1) Any change in occupation code of a Part 90 miner; (2) any movement of a Part 90 miner to or from a mechanized mining unit; or (3) any assignment of a Part 90 miner to the same occupation in a different location at a mine.

Underground coal mine means an area of land and all structures, facilities, machinery, tools, equipment, shafts, slopes, tunnels, excavations, and other property, real or personal, placed upon, under, or above the surface of such land by any person, used in, or to be used in, or resulting from the work of extracting in such area bituminous coal, lignite, or anthracite from its natural deposits in the earth by any means or method, and the work of preparing the coal so extracted.

Valid respirable dust sample means a respirable dust sample collected and submitted as required by this part, and not voided by MSHA.

§90.3 Part 90 option; notice of eligibility; exercise of option.

(a) Any miner employed at an underground coal mine or at a surface work area of an underground coal mine who, in the judgment of the Secretary of Health and Human Services, has evidence of the development of pneumoconiosis based on a chest X-ray, read and classified in the manner prescribed by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, or based on other medical examinations shall be afforded the option to work in an area of a mine where the average concentration of respirable dust in the mine atmosphere during each shift to which that miner is exposed is continuously maintained at or below 1.0 milligrams per cubic meter of air. Each of these miners shall be notified in writing of eligibility to exercise the option.

(b) Any miner who is a section 203(b) miner on January 31, 1981, shall be a Part 90 miner on February 1, 1981, entitled to full rights under this part to retention of pay rate, future actual wage

increases, and future work assignment, shift and respirable dust protection.

(c) Any Part 90 miner who is transferred to a position at the same or another coal mine shall remain a Part 90 miner entitled to full rights under this part at the new work assignment.

(d) The option to work in a low dust area of the mine may be exercised for the first time by any miner employed at an underground coal mine or at a surface work area of an underground coal mine who was eligible for the option under the old section 203(b) program (36 FR 20601, October 27, 1971), or is eligible for the option under this part by signing and dating the Exercise of Option Form and mailing the form to the Chief, Division of Health, Coal Mine Safety and Health, MSHA, 4015 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22203.

(e) The option to work in a low dust area of the mine may be re-exercised by any miner employed at an underground coal mine or at a surface work area of an underground coal mine who exercised the option under the old section 203(b) program (36 FR 20601, October 27, 1971), or exercised the option under this part by sending a written request to the Chief, Division of Health, Coal Mine Safety and Health, MSHA, 4015 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22203. The request should include the name and address of the mine and operator where the miner is employed.

(f) No operator shall require from a miner a copy of the medical information received from the Secretary or Secretary of Health and Human Services.

[45 FR 80769, Dec. 5, 1980; 46 FR 5885, Jan. 21, 1981]

Subpart B—Dust Standards, Rights of Part 90 Miners

§ 90.100 Respirable dust standard.

After the twentieth calendar day following receipt of notification from MSHA that a Part 90 miner is employed at the mine, the operator shall continuously maintain the average concentration of respirable dust in the mine atmosphere during each shift to which the Part 90 miner in the active workings of the mine is exposed at or

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below 1.0 milligrams per cubic meter of air. Concentrations shall be measured with an approved sampling device and expressed in terms of an equivalent concentration determined in accordance with § 90.206 (Approved sampling devices; equivalent concentrations).

§ 90.101 Respirable dust standard when quartz is present.

When the respirable dust in the mine atmosphere of the active workings to which a Part 90 miner is exposed contains more than 5 percent quartz, the operator shall continuously maintain the average concentration of respirable dust in the mine atmosphere during each shift to which a Part 90 miner is exposed at or below a concentration of respirable dust computed by dividing the percent of quartz into the number 10. The application of the formula shall not result in a respirable dust standard in excess of 1.0 milligrams per cubic meter of air. Concentrations shall be expressed in milligrams per cubic meter of air as measured with an approved sampling device and in terms of an equivalent concentration determined in accordance with § 90.206 (Approved sampling devices; equivalent concentrations).

Example: The respirable dust associated with a Part 90 miner contains quartz in the amount of 20%. Therefore, the average concentration of respirable dust in the mine atmosphere associated with that Part 90 miner shall be continuously maintained at or below 0.5 milligrams of respirable dust per cubic meter of air ($10/20=0.5$ mg/m³).

§ 90.102 Transfer; notice.

(a) Whenever a Part 90 miner is transferred in order to meet the respirable dust standard in § 90.100 (Respirable dust standard) or § 90.101 (Respirable dust standard when quartz is present), the operator shall transfer the miner to an existing position at the same coal mine on the same shift or shift rotation on which the miner was employed immediately before the transfer. The operator may transfer a Part 90 miner to a different coal mine, a newly-created position or a position on a different shift or shift rotation if the miner agrees in writing to the transfer.

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(b) On or before the twentieth calendar day following receipt of notification from MSHA that a Part 90 miner is employed at the mine, the operator shall give the District Manager written notice of the occupation and, if applicable, the mechanized mining unit to which the Part 90 miner will be assigned on the twenty-first calendar day following receipt of the notification from MSHA.

(c) After the twentieth calendar day following receipt of notification from MSHA that a Part 90 miner is employed at the mine, the operator shall give the District Manager written notice before any transfer of a Part 90 miner. This notice shall include the scheduled date of the transfer.

§ 90.103 Compensation.

(a) The operator shall compensate each Part 90 miner at not less than the regular rate of pay received by that miner immediately before exercising the option under § 90.3 (Part 90 option; notice of eligibility; exercise of option).

(b) Whenever a Part 90 miner is transferred, the operator shall compensate the miner at not less than the regular rate of pay received by that miner immediately before the transfer.

(c) The operator shall compensate each miner who is a section 203(b) miner on January 31, 1981, at not less than the regular rate of pay that the miner is required to receive under section 203(b) of the Act immediately before the effective date of this part.

(d) In addition to the compensation required to be paid under paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of this section, the operator shall pay each Part 90 miner the actual wage increases that accrue to the classification to which the miner is assigned.

(e) If a miner is temporarily employed in an occupation other than his or her regular work classification for two months or more before exercising the option under § 90.3 (Part 90 option; notice of eligibility; exercise of option), the miner's regular rate of pay for purposes of paragraph (a) and (b) of this section is the higher of the temporary or regular rates of pay. If the temporary assignment is for less than two months, the operator may pay the